RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Title:

Evolution of Indian Library System: Historical Perspective

SUBMITTED BY :

SMRITIMOY GHOSH

SUPERVISOR (S):
Dr. Bikash Mukherjee & Dr. Nimai Chand Saha

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DEPARTMENT OF ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY, CULTURE & ARCHAEOLOGY (AIHC&A)

VIDYA-BHAVANA, VISVA-BHARATI.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

One of the oldest civilizations of the world India has a kaleidoscopic variety of people and a rich cultural heritage. Excellency reached in most of the branches of knowledge in ancient India, great religious systems was created and developed independent schools of philosophy. In India, literature and learning flourished undoubtedly since the remote past and history of our cultural heritage extends far back. The ancient Indian tradition lays great stress on activating the spirit in man to enrich the profession and illumine and educate the whole community. Thus, she attracted the attention of the East as an important centre of knowledge and wisdom. It was not possible in one day or one generation, rather it an intellectual fall out and accumulation of experiences of centuries. Racial memory or social history of a civilisation is preserved by books and manuscript. In fact, books had enlightened the mankind throughout its history. Even in the past libraries had served as an important aid to education and acquisition of knowledge. Therefore, there increased a number of varied and vast storehouse of knowledge all over the country. We must, therefore a new meaning and thought of the Vedic and post-Vedic academic activities so as to function successfully in the present-day library as well as archival system. Indian history clearly demonstrates that libraries were closely associated with the contemporary education system as well as scholarship. Libraries were regarded as important centres of learning and very useful source of learning and knowledge in ancient and medieval India. Therefore, various religious centre like monasteries, mathas, temples and upasrayas maintained libraries for the sake of knowledge and wisdom. Further, many emperors, kings and nobles reared up and maintained libraries of their own. Thus, for a proper understanding of the growth of the educational system and intellectual calibre of a culture, it appears desirable to study historical development and changing patterns of its library system.

1.1 LITERAURE REVIEW:

Literature review is an important task in any research activity. It is important because it helps the study to know about the related works which have been done previously. A good knowledge of a particular area of a subject depends on the review of the related literature. It helps the researcher to know what kind of problem has been solved in what way and what problem has yet to be solved. It is not only helps to identify the problems but also helps to design the research problem. Therefore, study of the related field of history of library system in ancient and mediaeval India has to be reviewed.

Mookerjee, R.K. (1951) revealed the education system in ancient India. The study highlighted the unique contribution made by Hindu and Buddhist thought to both educational theory and practice. It throws light about the library system of ancient Indian Universities such as Taxila, Nalanda,Vikramshila, Jagaddal, Odantapuri, Vallabhi, Nadia etc.

Dutta, B.K. (1970) had made an attempt to depict the story of libraries and librarianship of ancient and medieval India which help us to have a fuller knowledge of the history of Indian education and culture as well as to appreciate the richness of the whole. He attempted to record almost all the available information about Indian libraries, gathered from ancient texts, inscriptions, accounts of the foreign travelers, historical accounts of medieval period and numerous history books.

Sankalia, H.D. (1972) remarked that Nalanda outgrew the limit of a mere Vihara of Buddhist learning rather it was something more than a mere seat of universal learning. It was a University also in the sense that it attracted students from all parts of the world. It had also a rich library containing countless books.

Trehan, G.L. (1975) opined that there is plenty of ancient Indian thought that can well be applied to remove cobwebs of frustration, immaturity and unrelated practices in the library profession, and to give to the librarian a distinctive mission of Indian librarianship. According to him the study of library conditions of ancient India has a special significance to all the nations in the East as well as in the West.

Mishra, Jogesh (1979) remarked that the history of libraries and librarianship in modern India appears in perspective as an important factor in the history of Indian culture. It is also an essential chapter in the history of the educational development of the country. He viewed libraries are the direct incentive to the development of educational, social and cultural activities. They contribute a lot to the awakening of public interest in day to day affairs by facilitating mutual exchange of knowledge among different section of people.

Marshal, D. N. (1983) stated that, in India, literature and learning flourished undoubtedly since the remote past and the history of our cultural heritage extends far back. He grouped the ancient Indian libraries into three categories; (i) royal court collections; (ii) collections at places of learning; and (iii) collections of religious centres like the Brahmanical temples or maths, Buddhist viharas or monasteries, and the Jain upasrayas.

Bhatt, R.K. (2009) has opined in a study that library historiography in India has not yet received the attention it deserves. This is due to the non-availability of literature and the students of library science are not much interested to study in this regard.

Besides, these fundamental and descriptive works of these scholars and historians there are enough materials focusing the historical and analytical study for proper and scientific understanding of library system. Some scholars have attempted to gather information about ancient and medieval libraries from different historical sources but they have lost historical

perspective, nor have succeeded in analyzing the evidences in the light of the principles of library science.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

Study of the history of the libraries was recognised in the western countries in the very beginning of the nineteenth century. The students of Library Science in Indian Universities are still not aware about our rich cultural and literary heritage. The study of the history of Indian libraries is a subject to full excitement because of its vast potential of insightful study. Yet it is found that the subject is remained ignored. The status of describing and evaluating the development and evolution of Indian library system with historical perspective is very much frustrating. In surveying the status of Indian library history, it often reminds us that the tradition is so rich, the library education programs relatively strong and there is keen interest in pursuing national cultural history, what is the actual status of library history in India? Although a core literature on Indian library history exists, it has many imbalances and gaps. The scholars should aim to remove the demon of ignorance and fill up the antiquarian gaps. Though the history of Indian libraries may claim richness yet no systematic attempts has been made to highlight the excellence of this history by adjudicating it from different angles. If the study cannot be done on the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches it cannot be justified properly. An interdisciplinary approach will reveal the study more acceptable from historical approaches especially on the "**Evolution of Indian Library System: Historical Perspective."**

1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

The general objective of the present study is to make a historiography of library system of India from earliest time. The specific objectives may be set forth as;

(i) To study the ancient education systems in India.

(ii) To study the genesis, growth and development of libraries in India in different stages of evolution

(iii) To identify the different forms of writings and writing materials

(iv)To explore the rich cultural, educational heritage of ancient India

1.4 METHODOLOGY:

At the outset, pertinent literature will be collected from different sources of both primary and secondary (including print and electronic) to conceptualise the statement of the problems of the proposed research work. Thereafter, in order to solve the problems and queries stated above, the following methodology may be adopted for observation and tabulation of facts & figures, which may be noted as below;

(i) Will visit to different libraries and personal contact with librarians and authorities,

(ii) Will surveys the archaeological remains of temples, monasteries and palaces, etc.

(iii) Will identify the Epigraphic sources - Copper plates (inscriptions) and Edicts on stone.

(iv) Will identify and record the sources of manuscript from monasteries, Museum, Universities, etc.

(v) Literary sources of published documents of books and journals as secondary sources covering pre-history, historical, Hindu, Muslims, Maratha, shall constitute the bibliographic sources for the methodology. The annual reports of government, colleges, universities, academic bodies, other establishments formed the basis of the study.

After collecting all the available information/ data relating to the proposed research problem, the same will be analysed in the light of the principle of library science (collection, organisation, preservation etc.) and historical perspective to explore the history and evolution of Indian library system.

1.5 TENTATIVE CHAPTERIZATION

The proposed Chapterization of the study may be as under subject to some modification;

Preliminaries: Preface, acknowledgement, Abstract, contents, list of tables, list of figures, list of abbreviations etc. will be under preliminaries.

Chapter 1*:* This introductory chapter may contain objective, methods, literature review and a brief discussion about advent of different Writing materials and forms.

Chapter-II**:** Early Indian perspective up to 12^{th} c. A.D. – Study will contain method of education, growth, development and evolution of educational institution and libraries.

Chapter-III: This chapter will highlight on the history and evolution of library system from c.12^{th} A.D. to the advent of Mughal Dynasty.

Chapter- IV: Will discuss the educational system and libraries of Mughal Period.

Chapter-V: This chapter will contain the growth and evolution of libraries from the post Mughal Period to Pre-Independence Period.

Chapter-VI: Conclusion

Appendices: Bibliography, List of Research related Publications, Maps & Plates,

1.6 CONCLUSION

Library is an essential ingredient of a civilised society, since besides experience; books are the main source of acquiring knowledge. The libraries in India have been almost an untrodden field particularly from the point of view of historical growth and changes so far. A systematic history of libraries is an essential chapter in the history of the intellectual development of a country. It intends also to relate a systematic and comprehensive history of the growth and development of libraries and librarianship of modern India. The glorious history of libraries can be traced back to the honorary past when our forefathers learnt the art of communication and writing, penned the information, knowledge and wisdom in the form of texts and manuscripts which carried the legacy of traditions, customs and knowledge from one generation to another. Through a process of evolution libraries of modern India have reached a stage where they have more or less common attitude and a common vision. The earliest knowledge hubs of Nalanda, Vikramshila, Taxila, Vallabhi etc. learning centres spread the fragrance of knowledge enticed the knowledge seekers across the terrestrial boundaries and quenched quests. A nation seeks its sustenance from the past and libraries are the best institutions which can make it possible for a man to link himself spiritually, morally and culturally with the past, and to enable him to strike his roots deeper in the soil.

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